

Date Mailed October 5, 1998

BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

Application of the City of Eau Claire,
Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties, as a Water Public Utility,
for Authority to Increase Water Rates

1740-WR-106

**NOTICE OF INVESTIGATION, TELEPHONIC HEARING,
AND ASSESSMENT OF COSTS**

On July 17, 1998, the City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties, (applicant), as a water public utility, filed an application with the Public Service Commission (Commission) under ss. 196.03, 196.20, and 196.37, Stats., for authority to increase water rates.

Applicant requests a rate increase which will produce a 7.50 percent rate of return on net investment rate base. Applicant cites increases in operating expenses and the value of its utility plant, since its last rate case in 1996, as the primary reasons for needing this increase.

The Commission staff has proposed an overall increase in rates of 8 percent. If staff's proposal is approved, an average residential customer's general service bill would increase 9 percent, from \$31.70 to \$34.50, quarterly. (An average residential customer is one using 2,000 cubic feet of water quarterly.) This proposed increase is approximately \$0.03 per day.

The utility is responsible for notice to its customers of the filing of the above application with the Commission, and, pursuant to s. PSC 2.73, Wis. Adm. Code, for producing proof of such notice at the hearing.

This is a Type III action under s. PSC 4.10(3), Wis. Adm. Code. No unusual circumstances suggesting the likelihood of significant environmental consequences have come to the Commission's attention. Neither an environmental impact statement under s. 1.11, Stats., nor an environmental assessment is required.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Commission will hold a public hearing on October 22, 1998, at 9:00 a.m. This will be a telephonic hearing involving two sites. The applicant will provide a room for customer participation in the North Conference Room in City Hall located at 203 South Farwell Street, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Customers may call the utility at (715) 839-4748 for further details on the location of the hearing room. This building is accessible to people in wheelchairs. Commission staff will participate from the Lake Superior Room in the Public Service Commission Office Building, 610 North Whitney Way, Madison, Wisconsin. This building is accessible to people in wheelchairs through the Whitney Way first

floor entrance (lobby). Parking for people with disabilities is available on the south side of the building. Any person with a disability who needs additional accommodations should contact Mr. Richard Teslaw at (608) 267-9766.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that this matter is deemed to be a Class 1 proceeding as defined in s. 227.01(3)(a), Stats.

Staff shall file a synopsis or summary of the testimony or other evidence presented at the hearing in this case. The parties, pursuant to sec. 196.24(3), stats., as amended by 1997 Wisconsin Act 204, sec. 24, may demonstrate that a synopsis or summary is not sufficiently complete or accurate to fairly reflect the relevant and material testimony or other evidence presented at the hearing.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the Commission deems it necessary in order to carry out its duties herein to investigate all books, accounts, practices, and activities of the applicant. The expenses incurred or to be incurred by the Commission which are reasonably attributable to such investigation will be assessed against and collected from the applicant, in accordance with the provisions of s. 196.85, Stats., and Ch. PSC 5, Wis. Adm. Code.

If there are any questions regarding this matter, please call Thomas McDonald at (608) 266-7236.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, _____

For the Commission.

Joyce A. Narveson, Administrator
Division of Water, Compliance, and Consumer Affairs

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